



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
Office of the Governor

Mark R. Warner
Governor

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**GOVERNOR WARNER ANNOUNCES VIRGINIA
BUSINESS ASSISTANCE INTERNET PORTAL**

~New Web site is a gateway for business assistance information and inquiries~

RICHMOND - Governor Mark R. Warner today announced the launch of an Internet portal that serves as a central point for business assistance information and inquiries, www.business.virginia.gov. Designed by the Virginia Department of Business Assistance (DBA) and the Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA), the portal consolidates information about Virginia's various business assistance and support services such as loans, workforce training, and licensing together in one site to allow consumers to find useful and relevant information quickly. The site went "live" today.

"This portal employs user-friendly technology to provide a single gateway to all the many services Virginia offers businesses throughout state government," Governor Warner said. "This new site provides immediate access to information and assistance, and further enhances Virginia's business-friendly environment."

The portal was designed from customer input and includes four main categories of information requested by businesses:

- **Starting a Business** – serves as a link to information relevant to businesses and entrepreneurs who are getting started, including registering and licensing procedures and permits.
- **Running a Business** – includes information such as regulations, employment and tax laws for existing businesses.
- **Business Resources** – connects businesses to services including counseling and industry organizations.
- **Out of State Businesses** – provides information applicable to out-of-state businesses seeking expansion or relocation in Virginia.

The site also has a "live chat" feature, providing businesses with real time access to the Virginia Business Information Center (VBIC), administered through DBA. VBIC's online support and assistance representatives give business users instant answers to questions about the

resources, services and forms found on the portal. A survey is also available within the portal to collect feedback in order to make further refinements and improve service.

“Our VBIC representatives were real ambassadors for this portal,” DBA Director Mike Eisenman explained. “They hear from thousands of Virginia businesses and entrepreneurs every year and were able to provide a great deal of insight on the content of this new tier of information access.”

The need for increased access to information via a centralized entry point was sparked by the efforts of a steering committee, comprised of business, educational and state agency leaders throughout the Commonwealth.

“The biggest challenge in creating the business portal was organizing the vast amount of information and resources to ensure that the questions and needs of business users and other customers are answered in the most efficient manner possible,” said Scott Somerhalder, General Manager of VITA’s Virginia.gov. “We commend the Department of Business Assistance for their dedication and expertise in defining the critical content for each of the major portal areas.”

The Virginia Department of Business Assistance supports economic development in the Commonwealth by working with new and existing businesses to provide workforce incentives, loans, business information, incubator counseling, and educational opportunities for the business and economic development communities.

Virginia.gov is a managed service of the Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA), the Commonwealth's recently consolidated technology and solutions provider. Virginia.gov manages the official Virginia state web portal, www.virginia.gov and assists government entities with providing information and services via the Internet.

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